**Warning Signs**

There is no 100% guaranteed way to avoid a bad contractor, but there are things you can do to help yourself find a good contractor.  The following are warning signs of contractors to avoid:  
  
**100% Downpayment**.  Good contractors ask for a partial downpayment, but watch out for contractors who require 100% up front, or downpayment made directly to the sales person, as opposed to their building company.  
  
**Few or No References:**  Good contractors should be able to refer several happy customers.  
  
**No Contractor's License:**  Al contractors are required by law to have and maintain their license. Be sure to confirm this information.  
  
**No Proof of Insurance:**  The law required contractors to have insurance.  If the contractor has no insurance, homeowners can be liable for accidents that occur on the job - even ones that harm the contractor!  
  
**No permanent address for business**:  Most reputable contractors have a permanent address for their company.  
  
**The Bid Seems Too Low ... way to low!**  Be sure to compare apples with apples by insisting each contractor bids on the exact same work.  Many times the "lowest bid" costs more in the long run.  
  
**Complaints to the Better Business Bureau:**  Even the best contractors can have people file complaints.  The smart consumer will find out how the complaints were resolved.  
  
**Bad Accounts with Suppliers:**  Most problems with contractors revolve around their business practices, not their building abilities.  A contractor's suppliers and banks can be a good source to verify solid business practices.